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DEPARTMENT FOR S/ES-CR AND S/ES-O; DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR IO

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SUBJECT: LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA FROM SECRETARY-GENERAL
BAN KI-MOON

¶1. SUMMARY: USUN HAS RECEIVED AND FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA FROM UN SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON, DATED APRIL 1, 2009. THE SG ASKS THE PRESIDENT FOR HIGH-LEVEL U.S. REPRESENTATION AT THE APRIL 14 DONOR CONFERENCE ON HAITI.

¶2. BEGIN TEXT OF SYG LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA:

Excellency,

I am writing to you in connection with the situation in Haiti, a country in which I know you share my strong interest. I visited Haiti with His Excellency Mr. William J. Clinton, former President of the United States of America, on 9 and 10 March 2009, just before the mission to Haiti of the Security Council. We saw people living in desperate poverty and a country struggling to recover from the multiple crises of 2008. The achievements made with the support of the international community since 2004 have been jeopardized due to the combined impact of these crises. The situation remains fragile, and Haiti stands at a critical juncture.

At the same time, we found grounds for hope and optimism that Haiti can break the cycle of poverty. Doing so will require increased external assistance in the short term to address immediate humanitarian needs, reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and lay the foundations for sustainable economic growth and development.

It will also require strengthening the Government's capacity to effectively use the assistance provided by the international community. However, international aid alone will not provide economic security. What is required is sustainable social and economic development to enable Haiti to move beyond recurrent crises.

At the request of the Government of Haiti, the Inter-American Development Bank will host a donor conference on 14 April 2009 in Washington D.C. The Government will seek immediate budgetary support and funding for initiatives related to the implementation of the National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Document and the Post Disaster Needs Assessment, as well as key recommendations from Professor Collier's report and other initiatives.

His Excellency Mr. Rene Garcia Preval and Her Excellency Mrs. Michele Duvivier Pierre-Louis, President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti, respectively, as well as their Government share a compelling vision for the way forward. For the donor conference, they are developing a focused agenda outlining the country's short-term priorities, within the framework of a national strategy for the long-term economic security of Haiti. It will identify actions to help Haiti recover from the crises in 2008 and to spur economic recovery with an emphasis on job creation, including by taking advantage of preferential trade agreements, access to basic services, food security and environmental protection.

I am confident that their plan can capture the imagination of Haitians and donors as well as private foundations and investors. This plan could form the basis of a renewed partnership between Haiti and the international community,

based upon a mutual commitment to achieve a clearly defined set of objectives. If the Haitians and the international community can achieve this together, it could become a new paradigm for economic recovery.

The donor conference is of fundamental importance for consolidating the fragile stability of Haiti. I wish to enlist your assistance in making a special effort to support Haiti through renewed technical and financial engagement so that Haiti is firmly on the path to lasting stability and sustainable development. To this end, I hope that you will be personally represented at a high level at the donor conference.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ban Ki-moon

Rice